

Lauren Hood, MCD
Chairperson
Donovan Smith
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
Director

City of Detroit
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-6225 Fax: (313) 224-4336
e-mail: cpc@detroitmi.gov

Brenda Goss Andrews
Kenneth R. Daniels
David Esparza, AIA, LEED
Ritchie Harrison
Gwen Lewis
Melanie Markowicz
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.

City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES
April 6, 2023
5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Hood called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Brenda Goss Andrews (6:11 p.m.), Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza (remote), Ritchie Harrison, Gwen Lewis, Frederick Russell and Donovan Smith

Excused: Lauren Hood and Melanie Markowicz

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve agenda with amendment to remove unfinished business and return at a later date, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. Motion approved.

II. Meeting minutes of February 16, 2023

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. Motion approved.

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – The request of INNOVO to amend Article XVII, Section 50-12-69, District Map No. 67 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show M2 (Restricted Industrial District) zoning classification or modify the provisions of an existing PD (Planned Development District) zoning classification currently shown on two parcels commonly known as 12701 and 12601 Southfield Road generally bounded by the residential area south of W. Davison Street to the north, Southfield Freeway to the east, Marquette Railroad to the south, and Artesian Street to the west. **(RA)** **45mins**

Present: Roland Amarteifio, CPC Staff

Petitioners: George Etheridge (Activate Detroit) representing Innovo, Trae

Allman (Innovo) Co-founder, Brian Mullally (Innovo) Co-founder, Architect Christopher Miller, Phillip Brasher (DMS) Representative, and Ronald Michaels (Meloria Group) Contractor for DMS

Mr. Roland Amarteifio, CPC Staff, via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated April 5, 2023, discussed the requested map amendment for 12601 and 12701 Southfield Road. The site is located in District 1, and it is currently zoned as PD. It is bounded by Schoolcraft Road to the north, Southfield Freeway (M-39) to the east, Jeffries Freeway (I-96) to the south, and Artesian to the west. The application is for modification of provisions of the existing PD or to rezone the PD to M2 (Restricted Industrial District Zoning Classification) at 12601 and 12701 Southfield Road to allow for an employee overflow parking lot and modified buffering and fencing. Mr. Amarteifio explained a detailed history of the site's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) variance in 1976 and Ordinance 6-90. The entire site is owned by Innovo. 12601 Southfield Road (421,000 square foot facility) is Gateway Industrial Center and 12701 Southfield Road (482,000 square foot facility) is leased by Detroit Manufacturing Systems (DMS).

Approximately a year ago, CPC Staff discussed the development with the applicants and explained the history of the PD zoning on the site. At that time, CPC Staff directed the applicants not to encroach into the 35-foot-wide buffer as part of their development. Later, when a permit was requested, Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED) failed to notice the PD zoning at the northernmost property line and did not send the plans to CPC for review. After the BSEED permit was approved and issued, the applicants removed the heavily landscaped buffer area and installed a 10 foot chain linked fence with barbed wire and some landscaping. There were no complaints from the neighborhood groups regarding the new landscape buffer and installed fencing. DMS expressed to CPC Staff their need to encroach into the buffering for additional parking. CPC Staff explained the current PD zoned land and its role as a physical barrier from the residential area, and that the PD zoning will need to be amended and approved by CPC and City Council in order for them to legally change the land use.

Mr. Amarteifio mentioned that the new development plan includes a robust storm water management strategy including bio-swale and sedimentation outlet structure. He displayed specific details with photos and renderings of the two separate proposals on the same site. The Master Plan designates the entire site as light industrial. There has been community engagement, and the developers attended four separate meetings including a District 1 monthly meeting hosted by City Council President Pro Tem Tate on January 28, 2023. Also, the developers attended meetings on March 3, 2023, March 14, 2023, and March 16, 2023, with community organizations, Grandmont Rosedale Improvement Association, Grandmont 1 Neighborhood Improvement Association and Schoolcraft Improvement Association.

Mr. Amarteifio stated there was some confusion with the permit for construction. BSEED approved a permit to allow the petitioners to construct the parking lot that is currently in place now and the redevelopment of the northeastern portion of the site without acknowledging the current PD. All are now trying to retroactively address and resolve the issue and place an agreement before City Council in response to Commissioner Russell's questions.

Mr. Gulock and Mr. Fazzini, CPC Staff agreed to research and include in the next CPC final report and recommendation how the City's new proposed fencing and screening ordinance applies to this scenario per Commissioner Russell's questions about the 10 foot chain-linked

fence.

Mr. Phillip Brasher emphasized that employees are forced to unsafely park on Artesian Street in the winter and at night. The new parking lot is for the safety of the employees, and the proposed plan is sufficient for the growth of the company and its employees.

Mr. Etheridge mentioned that there are ongoing plans for community engagement, and Innovo is looking to be actively involved with Grandmont Rosedale Improvement Association, Grandmont 1 Neighborhood Improvement Association, and Schoolcraft Improvement Association per Commissioner Harrison's inquiries about community outreach.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Walter Elliot commented he is a resident of the neighborhood. He expressed concerns with dust, noise, employee parking, trees, truck traffic, air quality, and the distasteful appearance of barbed wire on fences.

Marsha Bruhn commented that she previously worked on CPC Staff when the PD was approved. She expressed concerns with the removal of the trees, noise, truck traffic, gravel roadway, dust, minimal landscaping and the building being visible to the neighborhood. Ms. Bruhn suggested CPC consider more dense, mature landscaping, and a wall. She said the current and proposed appearance provides a negative impact on the neighborhood.

Ms. Carnell George a resident of the area expressed displeasure of the removal of trees, noise, dust, and truck traffic. She expressed that she would like more community engagement from the developers.

Commissioner Smith replied that landscaping and trees are for residents, and he requested this development to consider this in conjunction with the public's comments and concerns.

Commissioner Esparza expressed his gratitude to the neighbors for voicing their concerns, and he requested that CPC Staff and petitioners produce a reasonable proposal to present to City Council.

Commissioner Harrison requested to see examples of what denser landscape will look like for this site with better coverage, fencing, wall treatments, preventative measures for reducing dust and sounds, and more community engagement.

Mr. Brasher ensured the Commission that there will be more community engagement to reach a satisfactory solution.

Mr. Amarteifio, CPC Staff, read Ms. Rochelle Johnson's email of April 3, 2023, regarding her concerns with destruction and tearing down of homes in the neighborhood, and CPC Staff's response to her clarifying the rezoning matter per Commissioner Smith's request.

CPC Staff will return with a final report and recommendation on this matter at a later date.

**B. 6:30 PM PRESENTATION – Annual report of the Ombudsperson's Office
(Bruce Simpson, Ombudsperson)**

45 mins

Present: Bruce Simpson, Ombudsperson

Director Todd gave a brief description of Mr. Simpson's professional background.

Mr. Simpson discussed the Ombudsman's Office seventh annual report. The Ombudsman's Office is an independent oversight agency with high regard of being balanced and objective when providing a critique of City service delivery for citizens. The department identifies common ground with the Administration reached through good policy and programs to improve the quality of life for residents. Mr. Simpson expressed his pleasure with the blight removal efforts of the Joe Louis Greenway project and the Blight to Beauty program. He mentioned that the Ombudsman's Office pulls together community leaders to educate them on programs, so these leaders may inform their neighbors of the City's available assistance and services offered. Mr. Simpson expressed concerns with neighborhoods riddled with blight compared to issues with freeway clean-up. He mentioned that an increase in population, and major development deals will increase the tax base and the City's ability to provide satisfactory services to residents. Mr. Simpson reviewed the recommendations of the Ombudsman's Office. Also, he highlighted the Ombudsman's Office community outreach efforts, including 85 meetings held in 2022.

Mr. Simpson reviewed all the community activities of the Ombudsman's Office. Also, he encouraged the Commission to invite him to community meetings and social media presence in response to Commissioner Andrews' question regarding community engagement.

He announced that the Ombudsman's Office will have satellite locations in every district starting in May 2023, and it will have three different meetings in coffee shops and recreation centers, appearing in every district three times a month.

Mr. Simpson stated that the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) has had a decrease in the number of complaints received and their customer service has improved in response to Commissioner Lewis' questions regarding DLBA complaints. Further, he explained that the complaints are typically related to the unkept property DLBA owns. The properties that are undesirable require maintenance and contribute to blight in the community.

IV. Unfinished Business –

- A.** Consideration of the request of Ibrahim Bazzi to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-41, District Map No. 39 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification where P1 (Open Parking District) and B2 (Local Business and Residential District) zoning classifications are currently shown on one parcel commonly known as 6181 Cadieux Rd. and generally bounded by Harper Ave. to the north, Cadieux Rd. to the east, Berden St. to the south, and Harvard Rd. to the west.
(RA) (RECOMMEND DENIAL) (30 mins)

This matter was not heard, and the Commission formally removed it from the Agenda.

V. New Business – There was no new business.

VI. Committee Reports – Commissioner Smith informed the Body that a subcommittee meeting was held and a report and presentation will be forthcoming at the next CPC meeting, when the Chair is present.

VII. Staff Report – First, Director Todd updated the Commission on compensation or stipend for Commissioners. CPC Staff researched and City Council agreed to add additional funds to the Legislative Policy Division budget in order to provide a monetary stipend to the Commission. If formally approved on Monday, April 10, 2023, this new provision will take effect within the new year. The proposed amount is \$150 per meeting, per Commissioner and includes parking, mileage reimbursement, refreshments, and participation in training and conferences. There may be an opportunity for the Commission to have a retreat. City Council will formally pass a resolution, and it will be decided if this new provision needs to be changed in the zoning ordinance and added to the bylaws. According to the Zoning Enabling Act, CPC will have to adopt provisions for the administration of the stipend in the bylaws.

Secondly, Director Todd discussed the status of appointments and reappointments to the Commission. Recently, Commissioner Russell and Commissioner Esparza were formally reappointed. It is anticipated more interviews will be scheduled for other prospective commissioners in the near future.

Finally, Director Todd announced that this is Commissioner Brenda Goss Andrews' last CPC meeting. Commissioner Andrews will continue to appear and participate at the sub-committee meetings. The newly appointed member will be taking the Commission seat in May 2023.

Commissioner Smith asked Director Todd to remind the Commission regarding a motion to request that City Council present a written testimonial resolution, formal recognition of service for Commissioner Andrews.

VIII. Member Report – All Commissioners and CPC Staff individually related their sentiments, personal experiences and gratitude to Commissioner Brenda Goss Andrews.

Commissioner Andrews gave comments on public service, Citizens Review Committee and expressed her gratitude.

IX. Communications – There was no communications.

X. Public Comment – There was no public comment.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.